



**For Immediate Release
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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION
AND PARTNERS COMPLETE GREEN ROOF IN IPSWICH**

Yesterday, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the North Shore Housing Trust completed the installation of a “green roof” on the Whipple School Annex in Ipswich. The Annex, located next to Ipswich Town Hall, is being refurbished into ten affordable housing units for senior citizens.

A green roof consists of layers: a waterproof membrane is covered with a protective fabric, a water-storing drainage mat, a root barrier, and finally three inches of lightweight soil, into which hardy, drought-tolerant groundcover plants with succulent, water-storing leaves are planted. The plants will cover almost all of the roof’s 3,000 square-foot surface. The green roof was designed by K.J. Savoie Architecture, and supplied and installed by Magco, Inc. of Maryland.

The aim of the project is to demonstrate the benefits of green roofs, as part of DCR’s broader efforts to improve water conditions in the Ipswich River Watershed. Green roofs are designed to reduce the volume of stormwater that runs off rooftops, and to improve the quality of any water that does run off. The soil and plants absorb and store rainwater, and the plant roots filter and remove pollutants. The roof will also provide thermal insulation for the building, which will help decrease heating and cooling costs.

“The Whipple School Annex is an ideal location for a green roof,” said DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington. “This system will help improve water quality, an important feature for a building located adjacent to the Ipswich River. Plus, combining the project with affordable senior housing is an excellent example of smart growth.”

The green roof’s plants are expected to be fully established by next summer, and should eventually become hardy enough to require virtually no maintenance. Once the plants are established, the US Geological Survey will collect samples of runoff water to determine the effectiveness of the green roof in reducing runoff volume and removing pollutants.

The green roof project, costing approximately \$110,000, is one of nine demonstration projects designed to improve water conditions in the Ipswich River watershed. These demonstration projects are funded by the \$1 million Targeted Watersheds Grant that DCR received from the US Environmental Protection Agency.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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The project website is available at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/waterSupply/ipswichRiver>.

Photos are available upon request.

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